

Clarification of False and Inaccurate Statements Made Chief of Staff Richard Blom

7/4/19

The following is my attempt, to the best of my ability, to set the record straight as to the false and/or inaccurate statements made by Chief of Staff Richard Blom (Mr. Blom) in his letters dated 16 June 2019 and 1 July 2019.

Weekend of 19 April 2019

The most egregious false statement made by Mr. Blom was to insist that on or about this date that he and I were both instructed by Commissioner Carollo to work over the weekend to "review a list of his (Mr. Bill Fuller's) properties and examine various applications, permits and licenses associated with them over the weekend." This is a total mischaracterization.

Commissioner Carollo had requested our help (Mr. Blom and me) to fulfill the subpoenaed discovery process of nearly 100 items that came as a result of Mr. Fuller's lawsuit against the Commissioner and the City of Miami.

More specifically, Mr. Blom was asked to 1.) review the Commissioner's personal email for all relevant information that could be germane to the discovery process, and 2.) assist me in ensuring that all the information for all the discovery items had been addressed to the office's best ability. "Number 2" was at my request, because the task was too much for me to handle alone.

As to Mr. Blom's accusation of being informed on a Friday that the Commissioner would require his services on a weekend, this was the only instance that I can recall. Yes, some weekend time was required for work, but it was mostly due to special events, like holiday food distributions that affected the entire staff. From time to time, I will work with the Commissioner or on my own over the weekend to try and "catch up" or re-organize for the week ahead. This has happened of my free will, and I have never been forced or pressured to this.

Vacations

Commissioner Carollo expressed his preference for staff to take prolonged vacations during the August recess to Mr. Blom, Mr. Barcena and me. As a result, a spreadsheet, referenced by Mr. Blom, was created and maintained in order to keep the Commissioner informed and to ensure that we would have adequate staffing through the end of July. On many occasions since then, staff has taken prolonged vacations throughout the year. I recently was on vacation for a week at the beginning of July. Ms. Gisela Maestre was also on vacation during that same time. I never felt pressured by the Commissioner because I decided to take a prolonged in July during a commission week, nor has any staff come to express feeling undue pressure in regard to this matter.

Reprimanding Employees and Office Decorum

Contrary to Mr. Blom's statement in the letter dated 1 July 2019, under no circumstances have I ever witnessed or was I informed of Commissioner Carollo publicly reprimanding any staffer. To the contrary, the Commissioner has always comported himself in a professional and respectful manner. I have never witnessed, nor have I received any complaints from staff in regard to the Commissioner engaging in profanity laced tirades, as alleged by Mr. Blom. Furthermore, I was never told by the Commissioner that any one person or entity was not welcome in our office. To be clear, there has never been a request to create, keep or maintain a list of individuals or organizations that were not welcome in our office.

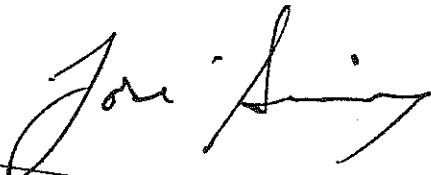
General Observations of Mr. Blom

Since Mr. Blom has made several false and/or inaccurate statements in the two letters referenced above. I believe it important to mention the level of frustration that I experience while working with him. Mr. Blom spent the vast majority of his time reminiscing of old cop stories from his days with the Miami Police Department. Personally, some of these stories were alarming as they would not be tolerated today's PD. It was obvious that he did not have a proper grasp of the day-to-day duties of a chief of staff. As chief of staff, why didn't Mr. Blom bring his alleged concerns to the Commissioner prior to his prolonged absence after stating that he no longer was able to fulfill the role? I find it quite hypocritical that he would make these complaints while seeking continued employment from this office in a lesser role.

During Mr. Barcena's tenure with our office, we would constantly comment to each other as to how Mr. Blom seemed "like a deer in headlights" or that "he has no clue as to what is going on." Most, if not all, of our assignments were as a result of figuring out what needed to be done or by having received directions from the Commissioner, himself.

As a matter of fact, all employees of the office would agree that I was the one providing as much leadership and direction as I could from a subordinate position to the chief of staff. It is important for me to note that through it all, I did develop an affection for Mr. Blom. I respected his service and his life experience. This is why many of his fabricated allegations have come as a serious surprise to me.

Personally, I never felt Mr. Blom's heart was in his work as chief of staff. He often expressed his desire to serve in a capacity as director/advisor of public safety for the city and to chase what seemed to be his dream and passion of starting a private business consisting of a crime prevention lab to further educate existing police officers and the public at large.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe J. Soto". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent "J" at the beginning.

To whom it may concern,

On the morning of Tuesday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019, Chief Blom called me on my cell phone during work hours. He stated that he was out sick and did not know how long it would take before he came back to work. He then proceeded to question me about an incident that occurred on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019 when Commissioner Carollo saw me during work hours conversing on my cell phone in front of City Hall.

I explained to Chief Blom that after the Commissioner saw me, he requested that I go back to the office where he briefly counseled me on not using my cell phone for private calls during working hours, and that he had been polite and professional in his demeanor towards me. I also explained to Chief Blom that I knew that I had made a mistake, but it was only because of an emergency crisis that a close friend was going through whom I was trying to help.

Even after I explained to Chief Blom that the Commissioner had acted professionally and had not done anything to offend me nor mistreated me, he insisted that he wanted me to say the opposite and to accuse the Commissioner of creating a "hostile work environment."

Chief Blom instructed me to text him the date of the phone call incident and gave me specific instructions to "ask the girls," meaning my female coworkers, to put in writing for him any problems that they had experienced with Commissioner Carollo. I felt that Chief Blom was putting me in a very awkward situation, but I was afraid not to follow the instructions of my supervisor, therefore I complied with his request.

Since early December 2018, when Chief Blom moved me to work inside the separate management area of the office, he went out of his way to build a rapport with me.

1. He treated me better than the other female members of the staff.
2. He would buy and bring lunch for me at the office on many occasions on a weekly basis without my asking.
3. He would sit by my desk for extended periods of time and talk to me about his past and his personal life almost daily.

4. He would send me home early on numerous occasions, at least 3 times a week, telling me "go home," or "get out of here," that he had to go home to have dinner with his wife.
5. He told me to text him directly if I was ever to miss or be late to work and he was always very lenient and accommodating with me.
6. He even took it upon himself to insist on helping me in preparing for the Entrance Examination for the position of Customs and Border Protection Officer on two separate days during working hours the week before I took the exam on May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

On Saturday, June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2019, Chief Blom texted me twice, once in the morning and once in the afternoon, asking me to call him. When I called him as he requested, he asked me if "the girls," meaning my female coworkers, had written anything against Commissioner Carollo and again kept insisting for me to say that Commissioner Carollo had "mistreated me" and that he had created a "hostile work environment." I again stated to him that I would not say something that was not true and that I did not want him to involve me in something that I did not understand the nature of what he was doing.

While I had already been feeling uncomfortable and awkward as to why my supervisor, chief Blom was so overly interested in being nice to me, I have now been experiencing major stress with the concern of not knowing when he will come back to work and having to work under his supervision after this whole extremely unpleasant situation that he has tried to involve me in.

I am afraid to go to work with Chief Blom as my supervisor after everything I have described above and am respectfully requesting a transfer to any other similar position within the City of Miami where I would not have to work under him.



Tanjha Quintana  
July 29, 2019

AUGUST 5, 2019

## POINTS OF CLARIFICATION

I WAS NEVER TOLD BY COMMISSIONER JOE CAROLLO THAT THERE WERE INDIVIDUALS THAT WERE NOT WELCOME IN THE OFFICE. I WAS NEVER TOLD TO MAKE A LIST BY ANY ONE OF PEOPLE WHO WERE NOT WELCOME IN THE OFFICE EITHER.

JOSE WAS OFFICE MANAGER AT THE TIME. JOSE AND ANTHONY BOTH DECIDED FOR ANTHONY TO BE OFFICE MANAGER TO ALEVIATE SOME OF JOSE'S RESPONSIBILITIES.

COMMISSIONER JOE CAROLLO HAS NEVER ADDRESS ME IN PUBLIC OR IN PRIVATE WITH DISRESPECT, OR YELLING. HE HAS ALWAYS TREATED ME WITH RESPECT. I HAVE NEVER HEARD THE COMMISSIONER USE PROFANITY IN OR OUT OF THE OFFICE.

RICHARD BLOM LIED TO ME SAYING THAT THE COMMISSIONER WANTED ME FIRED AND OUT OF THE OFFICE AND THAT I NEEDED TO LOOK FOR ANOTHER JOB. I DECIDED NOT TO ASK ANY OTHER QUESTIONS AT THE TIME. WHEN I LATER ASKED MR BLOM FOR THE REASON, HE GAVE ME THE RUN AROUND AND WAS NOT ABLE TO GIVE ME AN EXPLANATION. IN DECEMBER 2018 HE CHANGED TANJHA TO MY ASSIGNED AREA AND CHANGED ME TO THE FRONT OF THE OFFICE. I NOW FOUND OUT FROM JOSE THAT MR BLOM GAVE FALSE INFORMATION TO THE COMMISSIONER ABOUT MY WORK SO THAT TANJHA COULD TAKE MY POSITION AND SALARY IN THE OFFICE.



LISETTE PALLAIS

1. Commissioner Joe Carollo or anyone else in the office never told me that there was a list of people that were not welcome to district 3 office.
2. Commissioner Joe Carollo never yelled at me and had never hear him use profanity in my presence or anywhere else.
3. Commissioner Joe Carollo has never scolded or reprimanded me in public.
4. Commissioner Joe Carollo has always treated me with respect.



Mara Roman

08/05/19